(b) The offer of assistance was received by Ministry of Home Affairs in the form of a letter dated October, 4, 2004 written by Ambassador of USA.

(c) and (e) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(f) Government's position is that cooperative efforts in the field of counter-terrorism would be discussed within the existing framework of cooperation for such matters.

Extradition Treaty with Thailand

1497. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Thailand are finalising an extradition treaty;

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be signed; and

(c) what is the likely achievement of the treaty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes.

(b) The discussions for concluding an Extradition Treaty with Thailand are at initial stage.

(c) Once in force, the Extradition Treaty will provide a legal framework for seeking extradition of fugitive offenders charged with extraditable offences.

Death of Indian Haj Pilgrims

1498. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian Haj pilgrims who lost their lives in Saudi Arabia during Haj pilgrimage in 2004 due to stampede and other causes, separately; and

(b) the nature and extent of help provided by the Government of India and Saudi Arabia to the families of those who lost their lives during the pilgrimage?